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Hollister, Brandon A. and Scalora, Mario, "Broadening campus threat assessment beyond mass shootings" (2015). *Faculty Publications, Department of Psychology*. 816.

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Published in *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 25 (2015), pp 43–53.

doi 10.1016/j.avb.2015.07.005

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Submitted 9 April 2014; revised 9 July 2015; accepted 15 July 2015; published 23 July 2015.

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## Broadening campus threat assessment beyond mass shootings

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### Abstract

Record reviews of public figure, primary/secondary school, and workplace threateners and attackers displayed the importance of noticing pre-incident behaviors and intervening to prevent violence. General crime prevention strategies did not appear applicable. Similarly, campus threat assessment research has considered targeted violence as distinctive and unable to be reviewed within general collegiate samples, which has related to questions about the prevalence, predictiveness, applicability, and reporting of pre-incident behaviors. This article applies general criminological and crime prevention findings to these questions and presents campus threat assessment methodologies informed by these fields. With college student surveys, pre-incident behaviors have appeared predictive of general physical assault, which promotes investigation of the generalizability of campus threat assessment across collegiate bullying, intimate partner, stalking, and workplace violence concerns. In college student surveys, the majority of observed pre-incident behavior has not been reported to campus authorities and has been impacted by students' personal victimization, assessment of dangerousness, and relationship with the perpetrator. Efforts to enhance reporting in general criminological and crime prevention fields could be applied to improving pre-incident authority notification. Thus, viewing campus threat assessment within the broader violence prevention framework can advance the efficiency, effectiveness, and applicability of the approach.

**Keywords:** Pre-incident behavior, Campus targeted violence, Campus threat assessment, Violence prevention

Campus targeted violence, such as the attacks at Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois universities, has resulted in numerous deaths and nationwide concern (Scalora, Simons, & VanSlyke, 2010). This non-impulsive violence includes a perpetrator posing an identifiable or potentially identifiable threat to an individual, group, or organization prior to attack (Fein, Vossekuil, & Holden, 1995).

Campus administrators have often opted to combat targeted violence risk through expensive physical security measures (e.g., metal detectors, emergency phones) and zero-tolerance policies with suspensions or expulsions of many non-problematic students (Muschert, 2007; Reddy et al., 2001; Sulkowski & Lazarus, 2011). These strategies do not sufficiently address the infrequent, goal-directed behavior of targeted violence (Meloy & Hoffmann, 2014; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012; Sulkowski & Lazarus, 2011), as these attacks involve various individuals, locations, and weapons (Drysdale, Modzeleski, & Simons, 2010).

A behavioral “path to intended violence” (Calhoun & Weston, 2003, p.58) represents a significant factor preceding nearly all targeted attacks (Fein & Vossekuil, 1999; Meloy et al., 2004), and one of the best prevention options includes campus safety professionals gathering, assessing, and intervening upon noticeable threatening behaviors (i.e., pre-incident behavior) signifying foreseeable violence (Cornell et al., 2004; Deisinger, Randazzo, O’Neill, & Savage, 2008; Meloy, 2011; Scalora et al., 2002a). This prevention approach has been termed campus threat assessment and has been widely implemented (Bolante, 2014; Deisinger, Randazzo, & Nolan, 2014; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012; Scalora et al., 2010).

Aspects of campus threat assessment have not yet been fully examined (Gisburne, 2003; Goodwin, 2014; Muschert, 2007). The frequency of pre-incident behaviors in the general campus population remains uninvestigated (Gisburne, 2003; Meloy, Hoffmann, Roshdi, Glaz-Ocik, & Guldemann, 2014), which has related to assertions that pre-incident behaviors are common, not predictive of subsequent violence, and likely to subject non-dangerous students to unnecessary police attention (Gisburne, 2003; Goodwin, 2014). The impact of threat assessment procedures on general campus violence have not been explored, which corresponds with potentially unwarranted resource competitions between campus targeted violence, sexual assault (Paul & Gray, 2011), stalking (Buhi, Clayton, & Surrency, 2009), and

general crime (Selwyn, 2008) prevention efforts. The reporting decisions of pre-incident observers have received limited review (Hollister, Scalora, Hoff, & Marquez, 2014b; Sulkowski, 2011), despite several campus attacks occurring partly due to bystanders failing to extend pre-incident concerns to authorities (Drysdale et al., 2010; Scalora et al., 2010). Thus, further examination of the predictiveness and reporting of pre-incident behavior could enhance the support and the effectiveness of campus threat assessment techniques.

General criminological and crime prevention findings can partially address these aspects of the campus threat assessment approach. Abundant investigation of pre-incident factors and violence prevention have occurred within bullying, criminological, intimate partner, policing, sexual assault, and stalking research fields (Griffith, Hueston, Wilson, Moyers, & Hart, 2004; James et al., 2010; Paul & Gray, 2011; Polanin, Espelage, & Pigott, 2012; Yamawaki, Ochoa-Shipp, Pulsipher, Harlos, & Swindler, 2012) and can inform innovative campus threat assessment examinations. The current article reviews campus threat assessment, explores applicable general criminological and crime prevention findings, and provides empirical directions that could strengthen the campus threat assessment approach.

## **1. The development of campus threat assessment**

General criminological and crime prevention findings have not been fully applied to campus threat assessment, as targeted violence prevention has been considered distinctive from traditional crime reduction efforts (Meloy & Hoffmann, 2014; Meloy, Sheridan, & Hoffmann, 2008; Reddy et al., 2001). Campus targeted violence has been seen as more rare and disastrous than general violence (Booth, Van Hasselt, & Vecchi, 2011; Flynn & Heitzmann, 2008; Kiilakoski & Oksanen, 2011; Meloy, 2001; Muschert, 2007; Reddy et al., 2001), and targeted violence prevention has mostly focused on impeding sensationalized large-scale attacks. In fact, the campus threat assessment approach was developed due to consistent findings within investigations of public figure assassinations, threatening contacts to political officials, primary/secondary school shootings, and planned workplace violence (Drysdale et al., 2010; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012). General criminological and crime prevention findings were considered not applicable

to these areas of study (Fein et al., 1995; Reddy et al., 2001; Sulkowski & Lazarus, 2011).

These reviews of public figure, school, and workplace threats and attacks were mostly media, police, or government agency record examinations that suggested existing crime prevention strategies were not sufficient in addressing targeted violence (Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Fein & Vossekuil, 1999; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012; Reddy et al., 2001; Sulkowski & Lazarus, 2011). Targeted attacks were shown to be infrequent with 43 assassinations or attempted assassinations of prominent individuals in the United States (e.g., politicians, celebrities; Fein & Vossekuil, 1999) between 1949 and 1996, 23 attacks on British Royalty between 1778 and 1994 (Mullen et al., 2008), 3 United States federal judges killings between 1979 and 2001 (Calhoun, 2001), and 37 United States primary/secondary school shootings between 1974 and 2000 (Vossekuil, Fein, Reddy, Borum, & Modzeleski, 2002). This scarcity suggested limited usefulness in addressing targeted violence through general risk assessment techniques (e.g., base-rates and static risk factors), which would wrongly identify many non-violent stakeholders and fail to identify some high-risk situations (Randazzo & Cameron, 2012; Reddy et al., 2001). Assessing risk based on offender demographics and personality traits (e.g., profiling) was also questionable (Fein & Vossekuil, 1999; Reddy et al., 2001), as reviews of targeted attacks found substantial offender differences throughout demographic, personality, criminal history, substance abuse history, and mental health history variables (Fein & Vossekuil, 1999; Mullen et al., 2008; Scalora et al., 2002a; Vossekuil et al., 2002). Moreover, demographic differences did not predict likelihood of approach in samples of prominent figure threateners (Deitz et al., 1991a; Dietz et al., 1991b; James et al., 2009; Scalora et al., 2002a,b). Increased physical security seemed unlikely to thwart targeted violence, as a range of targets and venues had been impacted and perpetrators often extensively planned for avoidance of authority detection (Calhoun & Weston, 2003, 2012). Thus, in reviews of media, police, and government agency records, general crime prevention efforts did not appear to effectively impede targeted violence impacting college campuses (Randazzo & Cameron, 2012; Reddy et al., 2001; Sulkowski & Lazarus, 2011).

Rather, investigations of assassins, shooters, and threateners supported a unique approach to targeted violence prevention (i.e., threat assessment; Fein & Vossekuil, 1998). Across examined contexts,

behavioral commonalities preceded nearly all targeted attacks (Calhoun & Weston, 2012; Jenkins, 2009). For instance, “almost all [United States public figure attackers]...had histories of grievances and resentments,” and “many...had taken action in response to a grievance, such as writing a letter or visiting an office” (Fein & Vossekuil, 1999, p.325). Three-fourths (77%) of United States public figure attackers had expressed threats about the target to family, friends, coworkers, or others prior to instigating violence, and about half (44%) had displayed interest in assassinations (e.g., talking or reading about assassination). Similarly, almost all United States primary/secondary school shooters (93%) had calculated the attack for at least one or two days and had recent noticeable loss in status, relationship, or physical condition (98%; Vossekuil et al., 2002). Most (93%) exhibited behavioral indications of planning (e.g., gathering weapons, threatening targeted individuals), displayed intentions to friends, schoolmates, or siblings (81%), and generated concern from at least one adult (88%). Reviews of intended attacks toward British royalty, Western European politicians (Mullen et al., 2008), and United States judicial officials (Calhoun, 2001) had comparable findings. Thus, for targeted violence prevention, security professionals are trained to notice forewarning pre-incident behavior and intervene in these concerning situations prior to attack (Fein & Vossekuil, 1999; Fein et al., 1995; Meloy & Hoffmann, 2014; Meloy et al., 2008).

Due to these findings, campus threat assessment includes collecting and addressing escalating pre-incident behavior on this “path to intended violence” (Calhoun & Weston, 2003, p.58; Deisinger et al., 2008; Deisinger et al., 2014; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012; Scalora et al., 2010). According to this pathway model, perpetrators of targeted violence demonstrate grievance and violent ideation through displaying a sense of “injustice, mission, loss, or destiny,” a desire for “revenge, recognition, or fame,” interest in weapons or past assailants, and fixation on violence and a target (Calhoun & Weston, 2003, p.60). These perpetrators research and plan attack options through stalking, questioning others, reading about a target, and exploring attack methods. These perpetrators decide on a method of attack and prepare by gathering necessary supplies, setting up transportation, and acting in a manner that exhibits perceived finality (i.e., as most attackers plan to die as a result of their attack). These perpetrators must also breach target security prior to attack. Campus threat assessment



professionals are trained to identify potential perpetrators exhibiting these behaviors and have skills in gathering additional information (e.g., interviewing the subject; Van Der Meer & Diekhuis, 2014). Comprehensive pre-incident assessment allows campus threat assessment professionals to coordinate risk-mitigating interventions (Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Calhoun & Weston, 2009), such as victim safety planning, assisting potential perpetrators with grievances, asking third parties to monitor potential perpetrators' behaviors, and/or seeking legal repercussions (e.g., mental health board commitment or arrest).

Threat assessment has been considered the best campus targeted violence prevention option (Cornell, 2010; Deisinger et al., 2008; Deisinger et al., 2014; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012; Pollard, Nolan, & Deisinger, 2012; Scalora et al., 2010). Across contexts (e.g., primary/secondary schools, public figure protection agencies, workplaces), proper threat assessment has been noted to have significant success resolving dangerous situations (Booth et al., 2011; Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Cornell, Sheras, Gregory, & Fan, 2009; Jenkins, 2009; Scalora, Zimmerman, & Wells, 2008). Additionally, in United States primary/secondary schools, threat assessment has corresponded with more positive ratings of school climate, greater trust in authorities (Cornell et al., 2009), and less use of suspension or expulsion (Cornell, Allen, & Fan, 2012) than other targeted violence prevention techniques. Thus, with efficacious applications across settings, campus threat assessment was widely supported, even before empirical examination of campus targeted attacks (Deisinger et al., 2008; Deisinger et al., 2014; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012; Scalora et al., 2010).

## **2. Campus threat assessment research**

The applicability of threat assessment in preventing campus targeted violence has been explored with research strategies similar to record reviews of public figure, primary/secondary school, and workplace threateners and attackers (Deisinger et al., 2014; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012; Scalora et al., 2010; Sulkowski & Lazarus, 2011). The first large-scale campus targeted violence study utilized open-source material and analyzed lethal or near-lethal assaults in the United States with perpetrators' specifically selecting victims or "random[ly]" selecting targets matching "the[ir] victim profile" (Drysdale et al., 2010,

p.8). This categorization of violence was rare (i.e., 272 discoverable incidents between 1900 and 2008) and involved various campus locations (e.g., residence buildings [28%], parking grounds [27%], and academic buildings [26%]), perpetrator characteristics (e.g., students [59%], indirect affiliates [19%], and employees [11%]), and motivating factors (e.g., intimate partner conflict [34%], retaliation [14%], rejected advances or target obsession [10%], academic struggles [10%], and workplace issues [6%]). Many incidents included indications of planning, as threatening statements, stalking, harassing behavior, and/or physical aggression were observed by family, friends, employees, or the target prior to targeted violence in 31% of cases. Additionally, 5% of the attacks included other preceding concerns (e.g., misconduct resulting in psychiatric hospitalization and/or criminal charges). The authors noted additional pre-incident behavior could have been observed and not included in open-source law enforcement and media sources. Thus, with similar methodology as prior targeted violence investigations, forewarning pre-incident behaviors were displayed, and campus threat assessment was supported.

Within this threat assessment framework, the reporting of pre-incident behavior from collegiate students, faculty, and staff has been reviewed (Hollister, Scalora, Bockoven, & Hoff, submitted for publication; Hollister et al., 2014b; Sulkowski, 2011). Exploration of pre-incident reporting was prompted by examinations of pre-incident observer responses in averted and completed United States primary/secondary school shootings (Daniels et al., 2007; Pollack, Modzeleski, & Rooney, 2008). Investigative records (i.e., school, court, police, and mental health records) of completed United States primary/secondary school shootings revealed most pre-incident observers were friends (39%), acquaintances (29%), or family members (6%) that witnessed concerns directly from the perpetrator (82%) days prior to the attack (59%; Pollack et al., 2008). Many failed to extend their observations to school authorities due to fear of negative reactions, disbelief that targeted violence would occur, and misjudgment about the likelihood or immediacy of the attack. In media reports of averted United States primary/secondary school shootings, 57% of plots were uncovered due to students alerting authority figures (Daniels et al., 2007), with 50% of these reporting students being confided in by the perpetrator and 25% overhearing threats regarding their safety. The remaining preventions included school staff (39%), citizens, and/or parents



(18%) noticing alarming behavior. Thus, perpetrators rarely provided pre-incident behaviors directly to security professionals, and reporting from pre-incident observers appeared to typically be the initial step in targeted violence prevention.

The importance of pre-incident reporting was also noted throughout case examples of campus targeted violence (Deisinger et al., 2008; Drysdale et al., 2010; Scalora et al., 2010) and corresponded with collegiate pre-incident reporting examinations with vignettes (Hollister, Bockoven, & Scalora, 2012; Sulkowski, 2011). In one study, 967 college United States students were provided four vignettes that each possessed grievances and multiple threats from one individual (Sulkowski, 2011). In each scenario, approximately 70% of students were willing to inform authorities. Students possessing greater trust in campus services and connection to campus were more likely to report, while those with higher self-reported delinquency were less likely to report. In another study, United States college students ( $n = 113$ ) and faculty/staff ( $n = 96$ ) responded to less-descriptive vignettes (i.e., describing one, two, or three risk factors without accompanying explanation; Hollister et al., 2012). Faculty and staff had greater willingness to report than students. Large variability was seen in willingness to inform authorities across situations (i.e., 9%–91% for students; 39%–100% for faculty/staff), as students, faculty, and staff were more willing to report in vignettes with multiple behaviors, direct threats, and/or weapons. Thus, pre-incident reporting from collegiate stakeholders has been identified as a vital piece of targeted violence prevention (Hollister et al., 2012; Hollister et al., 2014b; Sulkowski, 2011), but has mostly been reviewed through vignettes that can include participants' unawareness of impactful situational influences and overestimation of helpfulness (Baumeister, Vohs, & Funder, 2007; Shaffer, Peller, Laplante, Nelson, & Labrie, 2010).

### **3. The application of campus threat assessment research**

Very few campuses had threat assessment teams 15 years ago (i.e., “one estimate is fewer than two dozen”; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012, p.283); but, after shootings at Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois universities, threat assessment techniques became widely utilized. These events corresponded with enhanced professional and governmental

backing, and the threat assessment approach has since been considered “an emerging standard of care” for targeted violence prevention (Deisinger et al., 2014, p.107; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012, p.285). Recent surveys have included approximately 80% of United States community colleges and universities possessing established threat assessment teams (Bolante, 2014; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012). Thus, most current campus targeted violence prevention appears focused on the recommended “path to intended violence” (Calhoun & Weston, 2003, p.58).

However, despite the impacts of pre-incident reporting on the threat assessment approach (e.g., nearly all media reports of averted United States primary/secondary school shootings mentioning plots being uncovered following reporting from students, staff, and/or citizens; Daniels et al., 2007), campus pre-incident reporting improvement efforts have not received similar application (Hollister, Scalora, & Hoff, 2014a, Hollister et al., 2014b; Sulkowski, 2011). Only one discoverable review of a pre-incident reporting intervention has occurred, which included a poster and advertisement campaign on police department websites, frequented campus areas, and newsletters at a large, Midwestern United States university (Bartling, Yardley, & Evans, 2010). These efforts displayed police contact information and emphasized an active, compassionate team approach to campus safety (i.e., “You have the power to help someone cope”, p.32) with “edgy... visual cues” (p.16). This intervention was reported to result in positive local media attention and increased collegiate stakeholder support for campus police, but no empirical program review was presented. Thus, despite consistent suggestions for pre-incident reporting enhancement (de Becker, 1998; Fein & Vossekuil, 1998; Hollister et al., 2012; Sulkowski, 2011) and concerns from threat assessment professionals about “black swan” events (i.e., unpredictable acts due to dangerousness existing outside the awareness of protective resources; Meloy, 2011, p.108), a lack of pre-incident reporting improvement review exists (Hollister, Hoff, Hodges, Scalora, & Marquez, in preparation; Sulkowski, 2011). Specifically, campus threat assessment professionals have been recommended to present material that challenges antisocial norms (e.g., disproving rape myths, correcting students’ overestimation of violence; Sulkowski, 2011), informs collegiate stakeholders about the range of pre-incident behaviors that should be extended to authorities (Hollister et al., in preparation; Scalora et al., 2010), and displays a single point of contact with the possibility of

anonymous reporting (Scalora et al., 2010); however, these options have yet to receive empirical review and may not be utilized on most collegiate campuses.

#### **4. The remaining goals of campus threat assessment research**

Proponents of campus threat assessment have noted that research regarding the importance of gathering, assessing, and intervening in pre-incident concerns is supported by decades of repetitive targeted violence findings (Drysdale et al., 2010; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012; Sulkowski & Lazarus, 2011); however, this research has been methodologically limited to retrospective record reviews of threateners and attackers (Meloy et al., 2014). Campus threat assessment is often presented as superior to unempirical safety approaches, like criminal profiling, intensified security measures, and faculty weapon accessibility (Randazzo & Cameron, 2012; Reddy et al., 2001; Sulkowski & Lazarus, 2011); but, the campus violence prevention field also includes heavily researched bullying, sexual assault, stalking, and intimate partner conflict findings that are likely applicable to targeted violence preclusion (Buhi et al., 2009; Chen & Huang, 2015; Fagan & Mazerolle, 2011; James et al., 2009). Administrators refusing to adopt “standard” campus threat assessment procedures have been described as “likely to be liable for negligence” and potentially “caus[ing] harm to student[s] or visitor[s] through...omissions” (Deisinger et al., 2014, p.114–115); however, with limited resources, these administrators must also inhibit intimate partner violence, sexual assault, stalking, and general crime concerns that are more common than targeted attacks (Buhi et al., 2009; Scalora et al., 2010; Thompson, Sitterle, Clay, & Kingree, 2007). Additionally, the under-explored base-rates of pre-incident behavior in the general population (Gisburne, 2003; Goodwin, 2014) and pre-incident reporting tendencies of collegiate stakeholders (Hollister et al., 2014a, 2014b; Sulkowski, 2011) suggest further advancement of campus threat assessment is warranted. Thus, the proliferation of campus threat assessment represents major advancement in campus violence prevention (Deisinger et al., 2014; Drysdale et al., 2010; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012), but empirical diversification can further enhance the application, support, and effectiveness of the approach.

General criminological and crime prevention findings can inform exploration of these remaining questions. Although targeted violence prevention has been presented as a distinctive process (Fein & Vossekuil, 1998; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012; Reddy et al., 2001), the prevalence and predictive qualities of pre-incident behavior can be reviewed within victimization surveys and research of violent contexts with escalating and repetitive safety concerns (e.g., bullying, intimate partner conflict, stalking, and workplace harassment). Collegiate stakeholders' responses to pre-incident behavior can be clarified through findings regarding situational, attitudinal, and social influences on criminal reporting. Community policing efforts and effective bullying and sexual assault bystander interventions can guide efforts to enhance collegiate pre-incident reporting. Thus, several fields can provide information and unique methodologies addressing under-explored campus threat assessment areas.

## **5. Addressing remaining questions about pre-incident behavior**

According to open-source records, perpetrators' threatening, physically aggressive, and harassing behaviors preceded campus targeted attacks (Deisinger et al., 2014; Drysdale et al., 2010). However, the lack of awareness regarding base-rates of these pre-incident behaviors in the collegiate population has related to questions regarding their predictiveness (Gisburne, 2003; Goodwin, 2014; Meloy et al., 2014). These base-rates can be estimated through United States criminal reports (e.g., the Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Report; FBI UCR), victimization surveys (e.g., the National Crime Victimization Survey; NCVS), and relevant primary/secondary school findings. Regarding threatening statements, in a United States primary/secondary school system of 32,000 students, 201 students were reported by authorities to have made a threat of violence over the course of one school year (Cornell et al., 2012). A larger United States primary/secondary school system (i.e., 118,000 students) included 209 instances of threatening statements assessed by school professionals in one year (Strong & Cornell, 2008). In a United States high school student survey ( $n=3756$ ) about personal experiences with explicit threats of harm in the past 30 days (Nekvasil & Cornell, 2012),

few students noted being threatened ( $n = 464$ ; 12%). Regarding physical aggression, according to the FBI UCR, approximately 3 reported violent crimes per 10,000 enrolled students occur each year (FBI, 2011). The NCVS included approximately 49 violent victimizations per 1000 persons 18 to 24 years-of-age per year (Truman & Planty, 2012), and similar rates have been observed with college samplings (Thompson et al., 2007). Few students (2%) in one United States college sample reported being intimidated with a weapon on campus (Miller, Hemenway, & Wechsler, 2002). Regarding harassing behaviors, the NCVS indicated 4% of 20 to 24 year-olds reported being harassed in the past year (Catalano, 2012), and these rates appear descriptive for most college student samples (Buhi et al., 2009; Selwyn, 2008). Harassing situations often include damaging property of a target, and in the NCVS approximately 13 property crimes per 100 participants per year were observed (Rand & Robinson, 2011). Thus, despite concerns that pre-incident behaviors are common and unrelated to targeted violence risk (Gisburne, 2003; Goodwin, 2014), these pre-incident actions would appear to be more prevalent in open source material regarding targeted attacks (i.e., 31% displaying threatening statements, physical aggression, and/or harassing behavior; Drysdale et al., 2010) than in the general collegiate population.

Additionally, in general criminological reviews, threatening statements, physical aggression, and harassing behavior have corresponded with increased likelihood of subsequent violence. In the violence risk assessment field, the frequency and versatility of prior violence is one of the strongest predictors of offenders' recidivism (Hare, 2003; Monahan et al., 2001; Yang, Wong, & Coid, 2010). Threatening and harassing behaviors correspond with increased risk, especially if consistently focused on one target (Kropp, Hart, Webster, & Eaves, 1995; Monahan et al., 2001). These risk assessment findings have been observed in general population studies. In a United States high school student survey, 9% of threatened students reported the threat was violently acted upon within a month (Nekvasil & Cornell, 2012). A United States national victimization survey ( $n = 1600$ ) indicated women experiencing consistent harassment from a current or former intimate partner often suffered physical (81%) and/or sexual (31%) victimization by that partner (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). Within NCVS data, victims noted 3% of violent offending involved "series victimization" (i.e., 6 or more reports of victimization in the past 6 months; Lauritsen, Owens,

Planty, Rand, & Truman, 2012, p.3). These victims typically reported one perpetrator (i.e., 35% of male series victims; 70% of female series victims) and one type of offending behavior (i.e., 80% of male series victims; 80% of female series victims) accounted for series. Thus, in addition to correspondence with targeted campus attacks (Drysdale et al., 2010), pre-incident behaviors may have a broad relationship with increased general violence risk.

Within criminological findings, the general base-rates and general violence predictiveness of pre-incident behaviors appear to support the campus threat assessment approach. However, further review would be warranted to determine if these findings apply to collegiate settings. Recent findings have examined collegiate pre-incident behaviors with general criminological approaches (i.e., large survey sampling). In a United States college student sample ( $n = 1075$ ), 38% noted witnessing pre-incident behavior on campus (Hollister et al., submitted for publication). The pre-incident concerns most frequently observed were threatening statements (i.e., seen by 15% of the sample), threatening gestures (12%), unwanted phone/email contacts (12%), and vandalism/property theft (10%). The least frequently observed were acquisition/ interest in weapons (1%), surveillance/monitoring (2%), and suicidal statements/attempts (4%). The sample included 4% of students witnessing physical assault, and 5% witnessing sexual assault/touching. Since participants were informed to focus on one individual and select all applicable concerning behaviors, the correspondence of preincident behaviors with assaultive outcomes could be reviewed. Participants observing concerning behavior ( $n = 413$ ) were separated into three groups: those that witnessed concerns but not physical assault or sexual assault/touching (NA;  $n=322$ ), those that witnessed physical assault (PA;  $n= 45$ ), and those that witnessed sexual assault/touching (SA;  $n=52$ ). The NA group was used for comparison, and 50% of the NA group observed more than one concerning behavior from the perpetrator. In the PA group, 85% observed additional concerning behavior (i.e., besides physical assault) from the perpetrator, and 73% observed more than one additional concerning behavior. The PA group observed significantly more physical following, repetitive face-to-face contact, threatening gestures, and threatening statements than the NA group; however, other reviewed concerning behaviors (i.e., repetitive email/ phone contact, vandalism/property theft, surveillance/monitoring, acquisition/interest in



weapons, suicidal statements) did not differ. In the SA group, 56% observed additional concerning behavior (i.e., besides sexual assault/touching) from the perpetrator, and 37% observed more than one additional concerning behavior. In comparison to the NA group, the SA group did not observe significantly more of any reviewed concerning behaviors. This student survey suggested preincident behaviors are not overly common within the general student population and are predictive of general physical assault on campus.

Additionally, within general crime prevention research, perpetrator motivations noted in open-source accounts of United States campus attacks have been widely explored. The empirical fields of bullying, intimate partner, stalking, and workplace violence have examined specific situations with multiple alarming actions, repetitive offending, and persistent focus on targeted individuals (Fagan & Mazerolle, 2011; Jenkins, 2009; Polanin et al., 2012; Romano, Levi-Minzi, Rugala, & Van Hasselt, 2011; Weller, Hope, & Sheridan, 2013; Yamawaki et al., 2012), and these fields could clarify the intimate conflicts, retaliation, target obsession, and workplace issues described as triggering perpetrators of campus attacks (Drysdale et al., 2010). Throughout these various campus safety concerns, gathering, assessing, and intervening upon pre-incident behaviors may represent a consistent goal, which would strengthen the support and applicability of threat assessment procedures. This connectedness would assist in resolving resource competitions between campus violence prevention efforts that are often poorly-funded and partially-implemented due to budgetary constraints (Buhi et al., 2009; Potter, Moynihan, Stapleton, & Banyard, 2009; Thompson et al., 2007).

Approximately one-third (34%) of perpetrator motivations noted in open-source material of United States campus attacks included intimate partner conflicts (Drysdale et al., 2010), and extensive review of repetitive and escalating intimate partner violence exists (Jenkins, 2009; Kuijpers, van der Knaap, & Winkel, 2012; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Yamawaki et al., 2012). In a United States national survey, approximately 70% of men and women suffering from intimate partner victimization reported maintaining their partnership with the offender (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Affected women indicated an average of 7 violent victimizations and affected men reported an average of 5 violent victimizations being perpetrated by the same intimate partner. These victims have described offenders utilizing a range of violent

behaviors (e.g., threats, weapon use, harassing behavior, physical violence, and rape), and half of affected women (45%) and one-quarter of affected men (25%) indicated fearing the perpetrator would cause severe harm and/or death. Surveys of United States perpetrators have displayed intimate partner violence escalating in severity (i.e., with one year between surveys; Okuda et al., 2015), especially with victim attempts to leave the relationship or physically fight back (Jenkins, 2009; Kuijpers et al., 2012). Perpetrators' prior physical aggressiveness, threats to kill, and weapon accessibility correspond with lethal force (i.e., in comparisons between abused women and homicide victims; Jenkins, 2009), and intimate partner homicides tend to follow estrangement. Thus, repetitive offending studied within the intimate partner violence field includes findings supportive of campus threat assessment and a pathway to lethal violence (Jenkins, 2009). The risk associated with intimate partner victims' violently reacting to conflict and departing from abusive relationships should be specifically considered in the management of targeted violence concerns.

"Retaliation for specific actions" was noted to motivate perpetrators in 14% of United States targeted campus attacks (Drysdale et al., 2010, p.18). Bullying research could clarify this violent responding, as bullying often involves recurrent offending and victim retaliations (Fagan & Mazerolle, 2011; Lauritsen et al., 2012; Polanin et al., 2012). For example, in a sample of Australian school children ( $n = 730$ ; average age 15 years-old), half of repetitively-victimized students were also repetitive offenders (Fagan & Mazerolle, 2011). Both repetitive offenders and repetitive victims had less supportive attitudes of authorities and greater compliance with peer misconduct than non-involved participants. Both repetitive offenders and repetitive victims had greater self-centeredness and impulsivity than one-time offenders. Similarly, bully-victims accounted for 3% of a cross-national survey sample ( $n = 11,033$ ) of 6th through 10th graders (i.e., in comparison to 9% only bullies and 9% only victims; Spriggs, Iannotti, Nansel, & Haynie, 2007), and these students had lower feelings of safety at school, poorer academic standing, and weaker peer attachment than non-involved students. School-aged bullying victimization has corresponded with increased weapon carrying and violent behavior in young adulthood (Hemphill et al., 2011). In a review of United States elementary and high school murders (i.e., during school functions) between 1994 and 1999 (i.e., data from police reports and interviews

of involved authorities), student homicide perpetrators were twice as likely to have been victims of bullying than homicide victims (Anderson et al., 2001), and perpetrators were significantly more likely than victims to have been disciplined for fighting prior to the incident. Thus, with increases in pre-incident behavior (e.g., weapon carrying; Hemphill et al., 2011) and violent retaliation following victimization, the bullying research field may be useful in understanding vengeful campus attacks. Specifically, campus threat assessment professionals could carefully review potential perpetrators' past responses to victimization, as this examination could generate awareness of potential perpetrators' coping abilities and interpersonal difficulties. Moreover, with pre-incident concerns (e.g., physical aggression, weapon-carrying) and escalating interpersonal conflicts, campus threat assessment techniques may be helpful in inhibiting assaultive bullying behaviors.

According to open-source records, "refused advances or obsession with a target" have motivated approximately 10% of United States campus attackers (Drysdale et al., 2010, p.18). The stalking literature has reviewed different individuals (e.g., ex-intimates, general population non-intimates, public figures; James et al., 2009; Meloy et al., 2008; Palarea, Zona, Lane, & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1999) impacted by the range of problematic behavior (e.g., spying, unwanted contact, physical following) associated with this motivation. Stalking behaviors are highly persistent, as 60% of stalking victims (i.e., in NCVS data) noted the perpetrator's unwanted contact continued for over 6 months (Catalano, 2012). Record review and interviews of stalkers referred to a community mental health clinic ( $n = 140$ ) found 83% of stalking instances lasted beyond two weeks and 50% lasted beyond three months (James et al., 2009). Stalking behaviors correspond with increased violence risk. In a sample of Los Angeles Police Department records ( $n=223$ ), 81% of ex-intimate stalkers and 36% of non-intimate stalkers threatened the victim and violently acted upon that threat (Palarea et al., 1999). In a sample of United Kingdom Metropolitan Police Service records ( $n=275$ ), 44% of public figure stalkers attempted repetitive approach toward the protected target, and 6% attempted approach while possessing a weapon (James et al., 2009). A community mental health clinic stalker sample ( $n = 140$ ) included 36% threatening their target, and 6% perpetrating violence against their target. Additionally, in multivariate analyses, the frequency and intensity of stalking behavior has related to increased risk of assault

(James et al., 2009; Jenkins, 2009; Meloy et al., 2008). Thus, as previously noted (James et al., 2009; Meloy et al., 2008), stalking violence prevention and threat assessment include similar goals for target protection. Collegiate stalking concerns could be addressed with campus threat assessment techniques, and intimate partner stalking issues could be managed especially carefully due to the high rates of targeted violence within this relational context (Palarea et al., 1999).

In open-source material, academic stress motivated perpetrators in 10% of United States campus attacks, and workplace issues related to 6% (Drysdale et al., 2010). Similar motivating factors have been explored in reviews of internal workplace disputes (e.g., coworker conflict; Romano et al., 2011; Scalora, Washington, Casady, & Newell, 2003; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2001). In a sample of Midwestern United States police records regarding internal workplace violence ( $n=92$ ), many incidents (32%) included perpetrators experiencing perceived mistreatment. One-third of perpetrators threatened victims prior to the incident (Scalora et al., 2003), and assaultive perpetrators were more likely to have criminal histories and job complaints than non-assaultive perpetrators. NCVS data included 56% of nonfatal internal workplace victims noting the perpetrator threatened prior to attack (Jenkins, 2009). Thus, although limited review of internal workplace violence exists (i.e., potentially due to the infrequency of this type of violence; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2001), preliminary findings would suggest campus threat assessment could apply to this research area (Scalora et al., 2003).

Cross-context considerations within the threat assessment approach have recently received exploration (Calhoun & Weston, 2012). A threat assessment investigation compared pre-incident behaviors across contexts of targeted violence to review “external and ecological validity” (Meloy et al., 2014, p.40). This study included record reviews of German and United States public figure attackers ( $n = 32$ ), German school shooters ( $n = 9$ ), and German intimate partner homicide perpetrators ( $n = 70$ ) and found evidence of attack preparation and target fixation across contexts. Most public figure attackers and school shooters exhibited identification with prior assassins, but most intimate partner homicide perpetrators did not. Unlike other attackers, perpetrators of intimate partner homicide often provided direct threats to targets or law enforcement, while only school shooters tended to share attack plans with a third-party. This examination

suggested a consistent behavioral pathway existed throughout targeted attacks and displayed specific factors to consider in preventing school shootings (i.e., third-party disclosure) and intimate partner homicides (i.e., direct threats to the target or police).

With a similar cross-context focus (i.e., public figure, workplace, K-12 school, and intimate partner targeted violence), a literature review explored the association between threatening statements and violence (Jenkins, 2009). This examination suggested threats were not predictive of subsequent violence in public figure attacks and noted mixed support of this relationship existed in primary/secondary school and workplace samples. The mixed findings were seen as related to distinctive nonintimate and intimate problems within primary/secondary school and workplace contexts. Threatening statements in intimate partner conflicts were shown to correspond with violence. These contextual differences were seen as related to an “intimacy effect,” in which “the more intimate the relationship, the more serious the threat” (Jenkins, 2009, p.192). Threat assessment professionals were recommended to act quickly and decisively to threats in intimate partner conflicts.

These cross-context explorations provided support for threat assessment techniques and exhibited contextual considerations; yet, focus on media and police records of targeted attacks constrained thorough examination of threat assessment applications. Moreover, neither investigated campus targeted violence, and neither discussed retaliation or stalking motivations. This omission corresponds with relevant triggers of past campus attacks and distinct manifestations of campus concerns remaining under-investigated. Specifically, collegiate faculty and staff tend to be well-educated and have high socioeconomic standing, and these factors have been repetitively shown to impact criminal activity (Blumenstein & Jasinski, 2015). This group could have greater ability to engage in less impulsive and subtler violent escalation than the studied populations in existing cross-context reviews. In comparison to the general adult population, college students are typically less experienced in romantic and vocational roles (Roisman, Masten, Coatsworth, & Tellegen, 2004; Sneed, Hamagami, McArdle, Cohen, & Chen, 2007) and may encounter challenges due to converging life transitions (Arnett, 2000). These students tend to have fewer responsibilities and greater support for minor misconduct

(e.g., binge drinking, illicit substance use; Selwyn, 2008) and often reside on or near large open campus grounds allowing independence and freedom necessary to confront adversaries (Scalora et al., 2010). Thus, in comparison to other environments (e.g., primary/secondary schools, general community populations), college students may be more holistically destabilized by triggering events due to less-defined self-perceptions (Arnett, 2000; Sneed et al., 2007) and may cope ineffectively with this stress through widely-obtainable and socially-supported ineffective coping mechanisms (e.g., substance abuse). College students may be able to confront sources of grievances quickly and easily without contemplating consequences (Scalora et al., 2010). Each of these challenges could affect targeted violence risk, which prompts several questions regarding the generalizability of the campus threat assessment approach, despite initial cross-context reviews and supportive findings across empirical fields (e.g., bullying, intimate partner, internal workplace, and stalking violence).

This generalizability could be examined with techniques utilized in other crime prevention fields (e.g., bullying, intimate partner, and stalking prevention), like general population victimization surveys (e.g., Catalano, 2012; Fagan & Mazerolle, 2011; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2001), perpetrator self-report studies (e.g., James et al., 2009), and categorical comparisons within agency records (e.g., intimate versus non-intimate stalkers; Palarea et al., 1999). Expansive collegiate surveys could explore the frequency and violence predictiveness of pre-incident behaviors, while separating respondents into categories based on the context of their observed concerns. Campus police record comparisons could contrast behavioral variables between non-violent and violent incidents within each concerning context. Overall, these further examinations would be expected to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of campus violence prevention through enhancing understanding of the interaction of different empirical fields. Specifically, for campus threat assessment, these explorations could advance comprehension and improve management of the various motivations of potential perpetrators. These methodologies could broaden campus threat assessment, if predictive pre-incident behaviors and escalating aggression are observed in additional campus concerns besides targeted attacks.



## **6. Addressing remaining questions regarding pre-incident reporting**

General criminological and crime prevention findings can also improve efforts to enhance pre-incident reporting. Campus pre-incident reporting has been mostly examined with vignettes of concerning behavior (Hollister et al., 2012; Sulkowski, 2011), which may relate to existing suggestions lacking feasibility and clarity (Hollister et al., in preparation) and no empirical reviews of campus pre-incident reporting improvement interventions being discoverable. Yet, collegiate pre-incident reporting improvement can be informed through general criminological reporting findings from large victimization surveys (e.g., the NCVS; Bosick, Rennison, Gover, & Dodge, 2012; Truman & Planty, 2012), comparisons of cross-jurisdictional samples (Goudriaan, Wittebrood, & Nieuwbeerta, 2006; Schnebly, 2008), and differential reporting rates across offenses (Tarling & Morris, 2010). Additionally, willingness to report has been examined throughout empirical violence prevention fields (e.g., bullying, intimate partner, stalking, and sexual assault prevention efforts), and these fields have implemented and reviewed interventions with varying impacts on reporting outcomes (Brecklin & Forde, 2001; Breitenbecher, 2000; Buhi et al., 2009; Paul & Gray, 2011; Polanin et al., 2012). Thus, many general criminological explorations and empirical violence prevention fields can inform campus threat assessment pre-incident reporting improvement.

Police are notified of approximately 40% of criminal activity (Bosick et al., 2012; Truman & Planty, 2012). Serious crimes, such as offenses with victim injury or property loss, tend to be highly reported (Goudriaan et al., 2006; Tarling & Morris, 2010). For example, according to the NCVS, in 2011, 67% of aggravated assaults were reported to authorities, in comparison to 43% of simple assaults (Truman & Planty, 2012). 83% of motor vehicle thefts were provided to police, in comparison to 30% of general thefts. Completed criminal activity (i.e., in comparison to attempted or threatened misconduct) and weapon use have related to significantly greater authority notification rates (Truman & Planty, 2012; Zavala, 2010). Thus, with consistent criminological findings regarding severity, this incident characteristic could similarly affect pre-incident reporting (Hollister et al., submitted for publication).

Within criminological analyses, observer characteristics have impacted reporting (Bosick et al., 2012; Tarling & Morris, 2010). About two-thirds of reported criminal activity is from directly victimized parties, and victims are especially likely to report if seeking medical or property insurance reimbursement (Bosick et al., 2012; Tarling & Morris, 2010). Across large victimization surveys, male gender, low socioeconomic standing, and minority ethnic status have related to less likelihood to report, and observers engaging in deviant activity at the time of offending and identifying with delinquent social groups also have been unlikely to report (Nekvasil & Cornell, 2012; Slocum, Taylor, Brick, & Esbensen, 2010; Zavala, 2010). Similarly, with United States middle school samples and vignettes about weapon-carrying peers, males and students with minority ethnic status were significantly less likely to have willingness to report (Brank et al., 2007), and these demographic factors related to less reporting in high school students' self-reported responses to actual threats (Nekvasil & Cornell, 2012). Repetitive exposure to criminal behavior has corresponded with less authority notification upon witnessing subsequent misconduct, and offenses typically involving serial victimization of one party (e.g., domestic violence; Thompson et al., 2007) have very low reporting rates (Buhi et al., 2009; Tarling & Morris, 2010). Thus, these observer characteristics could relate to collegiate pre-incident reporting decisions (Hollister et al., 2014b).

Criminological findings have highlighted relational factors impacting reporting. In large United States victimization surveys, offenses committed by strangers to the victim include higher reporting rates than criminal acts involving close victim-perpetrator relationships (Bosick et al., 2012; Zavala, 2010), and this same trend has been noted throughout vignette analyses (Brank et al., 2007; Weller et al., 2013; Yamawaki et al., 2012). In United States collegiate victim samples, closer victim-offender relationships have corresponded with failure to report due to victims having a sense of loyalty to the offender, a fear of retaliation from an offender, and perceptions of the crime as a private or personal matter (Buhi et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2007). In United Kingdom general population and United States collegiate vignette research, close victim-offender relationships has related to bystanders minimizing the offender's fault and the problematic nature of offending behavior (Weller et al., 2013; Yamawaki et al., 2012). In

NCVS data, bystanders have been more likely to report if possessing close relationships with the victim (Bosick et al., 2012) and less likely to report if having a friendship or intimate partnership with the perpetrator (Zavala, 2010). Thus, a range of relational factors could affect campus victim and bystander pre-incident reporting.

Additionally, within criminological and crime prevention findings, several attitudinal factors have impacted reporting decisions. In cross-national victim samples, reporters have noted having confidence in authorities to manage perpetrator risk and prevent subsequent criminal activity (Goudriaan et al., 2006; Tarling & Morris, 2010). In United States collegiate victim samples, those failing to report have described doubting the ability of authorities to prevent further victimization and take their concerns seriously (Buhi et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2007). In cross-jurisdictional comparisons, countries and communities with greater trust in police have heightened reporting rates (Goudriaan et al., 2006; Schnebly, 2008). Thus, trust in campus authorities may relate to increased pre-incident reporting (Hollister et al., 2014b; Sulkowski, 2011). In a large United States middle school bullying prevention effort ( $n = 2589$ ; Perkins, Craig, & Perkins, 2011), willingness to inform authorities improved following an intervention that lowered perceived peer support of bullying. In a United States collegiate student sample ( $n=2500$ ), males were more willing to intervene in problematic sexual behaviors if believing other men would impose as well (Fabiano, Perkins, Berkowitz, Linkenbach, & Stark, 2003). Thus, estimations of peer misconduct have been theorized to affect student reporting decisions across contexts (Neighbors et al., 2010; Paul & Gray, 2011; Sulkowski, 2011). In vignettes of various campus safety concerns (e.g., intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and stalking), students with greater adherence to beliefs that the world is consistently fair have been less likely to assist victims (Paul & Gray, 2011; Weller et al., 2013; Yamawaki et al., 2012), as this attitude pattern corresponds with victim-blaming and rationalization of offending behavior. A United States campus sexual assault prevention effort (i.e., a one-hour presentation for male students) focused on confronting these just world beliefs resulted in greater willingness to intervene in peer misconduct (Foubert & Perry, 2007; Paul & Gray, 2011). Thus, reducing just world beliefs could enhance pre-incident reporting. Campus threat assessment could consider these changeable attitudinal reporting influences

in efforts to increase pre-incident authority notification (Hollister et al., in preparation).

Several violence prevention efforts have aimed to enhance reporting (Paul & Gray, 2011; Perkins et al., 2011; Polanin et al., 2012). Community policing efforts have increased stakeholders' non-crisis interactions with officers (e.g., foot patrol), exhibited collaborative approaches to increasing safety (i.e., through print media, Internet displays, and community meetings), and enhanced prosocial partnerships between community agencies, authority figures, and stakeholders (Bain, Robinson, & Conser, 2014; Griffith et al., 2004; Schnebly, 2008). Community policing includes fair and legitimate processes that broadly assist victims and struggling perpetrators (Mazerolle, Antrobus, Bennett, & Tyler, 2013; Tarling & Morris, 2010; Tyler, Sherman, Strang, Barnes, & Woods, 2007). In cross-jurisdictional comparisons of NCVS data, community policing has related to increases in reporting (Levitt, 1998; Schnebly, 2008). In primary/secondary schools, bullying prevention efforts have encouraged bystanders to actively promote an anti-harassment school culture and speak out against observed bullying behavior (Paluck & Shepherd, 2012; Perkins et al., 2011; Polanin et al., 2012). Across multi-national quasi-experimental and randomized controlled comparisons, these bystander efforts have significantly increased willingness to intervene and seek help for victims (Polanin et al., 2012). Intervention length has not impacted outcome, but nonauthority figure facilitators and opportunities for role-playing has corresponded with improved effectiveness. Most collegiate sexual assault interventions aim to correct rape myths and just world beliefs through posters, college courses, presentations, and/or discussion-based programming (Brecklin & Forde, 2001; Breitenbecher, 2000). Pre- and post-test survey comparisons of self-report measures of rape myth acceptance and likelihood of engaging in sexual aggression are generally used to examine effectiveness (Brecklin & Forde, 2001; Breitenbecher, 2000; Paul & Gray, 2011), and most sexual assault prevention interventions produce moderate reduction in these variables that attenuate over time (Brecklin & Forde, 2001; Paul & Gray, 2011). In meta-analyses, the intervention mode and length have not impacted outcome. The inclusion of multiple, personally-engaging activities (e.g., small discussion groups and written processing following a presentation) has enhanced the amount and maintenance

of positive changes. Interventions with small numbers of like-minded participants have had greater effects than broader efforts, as earnest and relatable review can occur with material formed to the perceptions of the specific group. Since males in social organizations commit a substantial portion of collegiate sexual assault, many effective sexual assault prevention programs have focused on fraternity members and male athletic teams (Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Perry, 2007). Bystander reporting has been infrequently examined within sexual assault prevention efforts. But, in efforts that have measured willingness to report, this variable has corresponded with lowered rape myth acceptance and less likelihood of engaging in sexual aggression (Foubert & Perry, 2007; Potter et al., 2009). Small, discussion-based interventions with like-minded participants have had better outcomes on willingness to report than campus-wide poster campaigns (Foubert & Perry, 2007). Thus, several reviews have clarified effective interventions impacting reporting outcomes, and these findings can guide collegiate reporting improvement efforts.

An empirical understanding of interacting reporting influences has been the initial step in the development of effective reporting interventions (Bain et al., 2014; Breitenbecher, 2000; Paul & Gray, 2011; Polanin et al., 2012), and recent campus threat assessment findings have broadly examined pre-incident reporting with large college student surveys (i.e., similar to general criminological investigations; Hodges, Low, Hollister, Viñas-Racionero, & Scalora, in preparation; Hollister et al., in preparation; Hollister et al., submitted for publication). With a sample of United States college student pre-incident observers (i.e., 38% of the general sampling;  $n = 413$ ), 26% reported their concerns to campus authorities (i.e., either campus administration, faculty, or police; Hollister et al., submitted for publication). Students seeing acquisition/interest in weapons (43%), suicidal statements/attempts (40%), and repetitive unwanted face-to-face contact (37%) were most likely to inform authorities, while students seeing vandalism/property theft (22%), threatening statements (25%), and threatening gestures (28%) were least likely. Students witnessing assaultive behavior (i.e., physical assault and/or sexual assault/ touching) were significantly more likely to report than observers of non-assaultive concerns; however, no significant differences were found in comparisons with multiple concerning behaviors, threatening statements, or vandalism/property theft. With this sample, observers' reasons for pre-incident

responses were explored (Hodges et al., in preparation). Students selected applicable influences from multiple-choice lists, and reporters noted impending danger, observation of harm caused by a perpetrator, and awareness of campus resources impacted their decision. Students failing to report described not wanting to get involved and not considering the behavior as indicative of subsequent risk. This sample was expanded ( $n = 1735$  with 631 observing pre-incident behavior) and hypothetical (i.e., responses to vignettes) and actual reporting responses to campus safety concerns were examined with approximately 20 variables of reporting influences (Hollister et al., in preparation). In hypothetical reporting, males, students with self-reported delinquency, students with less feelings of safety on campus, and students with actual exposure to pre-incident behavior had significantly less willingness to report. Students with greater trust in campus police had more willingness to report, and several variables had non-significant relationships with hypothetical reporting (e.g., ethnicity, campus connectedness, peer loyalty, perceptions of social norms, and just world beliefs). In binary analyses of actual reporting responses ( $n = 631$ ), several incident characteristics (i.e., greater amounts of preincident behavior observed, witnessed assaultive behavior, witnessed vandalism/property theft, and personal victimization) corresponded with authority notification, higher estimation of peer misconduct was the only measured attitudinal variable that significantly related to increased reporting, and no relational factors were significant. In multivariate analyses with actual reporting responses, most incident characteristics (i.e., except personal victimization) were no longer significant after controlling for other influences. A friendship with the perpetrator was the only measured relational influence that approached significance, and higher estimation of peer misconduct and greater adherence to just world beliefs were the only attitudinal factors significantly corresponding with increased reporting. Thus, in large United States college student surveys, most pre-incident behavior observations appear to not be reported to campus authorities, which suggests campus pre-incident reporting improvement efforts are important to violence prevention (Hodges et al., in preparation; Hollister et al., in preparation; Hollister et al., submitted for publication). Due to the absence of demographic reporting differences in these studies, campus-wide efforts may be the best approach to addressing this concern. Effective policing strategies allowing victims



to feel supported and treated fairly could enhance reporting, as prior exposure to pre-incident concerns corresponded with unwillingness to report. Students' awareness of the dangerousness and risk of pre-incident behaviors related to heightened reporting, and campus administrators could display the range of concerning activity that can precede violence. Non-victimized bystanders and friends of the potential perpetrator could be prompted to report through efforts to exhibit the helpful interventions and referrals that campus police can utilize to assist struggling individuals.

These preliminary findings assist in clarifying intervention techniques and attitudinal targets that can improve collegiate pre-incident reporting (Hodges et al., in preparation; Hollister et al., in preparation; Hollister et al., submitted for publication). Examinations of prevention efforts incorporating displays (e.g., posters, Internet postings) of the range of forewarning behaviors and helpful police interventions could follow and could utilize cross-jurisdictional, randomized controlled, and pre-test-post-test comparisons that have been useful in general violence prevention reporting improvement efforts (Levitt, 1998; Paul & Gray, 2011; Polanin et al., 2012; Schnebly, 2008). Thus, through guiding research of pre-incident reporting improvement efforts, general criminological and violence prevention findings can advance the ability of campus threat assessment professionals to gather, assess, and intervene in situations with pre-incident behavior.

## **7. Conclusion**

Campus threat assessment has often been heralded as "well-tested" (Pollard et al., 2012, p.264), "not new" (Randazzo & Cameron, 2012, p.278), and effective due to "several decades" (p.278) of empirical research and successful implementation. These assertions may be accurate, as campus threat assessment was developed due to consistent findings within government agency, media, and police records of public figure, primary/secondary school, and workplace threats and attacks (Deisinger et al., 2008; Deisinger et al., 2014; Drysdale et al., 2010; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012) and has widespread support and use (Bolante, 2014; Pollard et al., 2012; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012). Additionally, campus threat assessment has been deemed an

“emerging standard of care” (Deisinger et al., 2014, p.107; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012, p.285) for inhibiting “targeted on-campus violence” (Pollard et al., 2012, p.264).

Yet, long-standing and uniform targeted violence findings (i.e., with government agency, media, and police records) have not appeared to address enduring questions regarding pre-incident behaviors and reporting (Gisburne, 2003; Goodwin, 2014; Meloy et al., 2014). Specifically, in the general collegiate population, the prevalence and predictiveness of pre-incident behavior has been noted to be unexamined, the application of campus threat assessment across collegiate safety concerns (e.g., bullying, intimate partner, stalking, and workplace violence) has been under-reviewed, and the exploration of pre-incident reporting has been mostly limited to vignette research (Hollister et al., 2012; Sulkowski, 2011). In the current article, general criminological and violence prevention findings were applied to addressing these aspects of the campus threat assessment approach. Innovative methodology and recent campus targeted violence results were reviewed, and campus threat assessment appeared supported throughout (Hollister et al., 2014a; Hollister et al., submitted for publication). Further examinations seemed necessary in determining the generalizability of campus threat assessment techniques and advancing collegiate pre-incident reporting improvement efforts, and general criminological and violence prevention methodologies could address these remaining concerns.

With general criminological and crime prevention nuances, campus threat assessment could be considered an expanding and dynamic field with empirical opportunities for improvement. Constraining campus threat assessment investigation to record reviews of large-scale attacks and vignettes of threatening behavior would not appear warranted. After decades of supportive reviews of government agency, media, and police records, researchers could embrace the questions remaining within campus threat assessment and seek increased efficiency, effectiveness, and applicability for the approach. Willingness to view campus threat assessment within the broader violence prevention framework would represent a major stride toward these goals.

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